

## **Testimony in Support of HB 6664**

### **An Act Concerning Managing Waste and Creating a Waste Authority**

Dear Honored Co-Chairs Sen. Lopes and Rep. Gresko, Vice Chairs Sen. Hochadel and Rep. Palm, Ranking Members Sen. Harding and Rep. Callahan, Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee:

My name is Serena Levingston, and I'm a junior at Wesleyan University. As a member of the climate action group Sunrise Wesleyan, I find it imperative to write to you in support of HB 6664. As a four-year Middletown resident, I am deeply invested in the health of my community and communities across Connecticut. I've grown up believing the narrative that individual consumers are entirely responsible for saving the environment, through small actions like turning off the lights or using less water. However, the primary responsibility must be placed squarely on the producers. HB 6664 does this, holding producers accountable for environmental degradation or healing.

I am testifying to urge your support of Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging as a major step that our state can take to address the solid waste crisis. EPR represents a critical step in stabilizing our waste management system and incentivizing producers and vendors to adopt more sustainable packaging.

- EPR for packaging will promote **increased recycling** by creating stable funding and standardizing waste-management practices in Connecticut. EPR for packaging in other states, Canadian provinces, and countries in Europe has resulted in greatly improved recycling rates, according to a [study by the Recycling Partnership](#).
- EPR for packaging will provide **education and outreach** that will reduce “wishcycling” and contamination, thereby improving the quality of the material collected and its potential for reuse. It can also increase participation in waste-reduction programs.
- EPR for packaging will **make producers responsible and accountable**. It will initiate change in a corporate culture that has hitherto maximized single-use products and encouraged wastefulness. It will incentivize producers to make more sustainable packaging.
- EPR for packaging will **relieve municipalities** of a heavy financial burden and shift waste-management costs to corporations that profit from the sale of packaged products. Revenue from an EPR program can fund the construction and operation of more versatile recycling facilities.
- DEEP estimates EPR for packaging will **divert 190,000 tons of waste** annually and save Connecticut's municipalities \$50 million dollars in tipping fees.

Thank you very much for your careful consideration of these issues.

Sincerely yours,  
Serena Levingston, Middletown